

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the Application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 – 15 (Cancelled)

Claim 16 (amended)

Claims 17 – 20 (as last presented)

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Amendments to the Claims:

1-15. (cancelled)

16. (currently amended) A valve plate assembly comprising a valve plate, a reed valve, a cylinder head, and a suction chamber positioned between the valve plate and the cylinder head, the reed valve being such that it comprises a reed, a port which is opened and closed by the reed, and damper means for mechanically damping motion of the reed; the port being positioned in the valve plate; the reed being positioned on a side of the valve plate which closes a cylinder of a piston and cylinder arrangement whereby the reed flexes into the cylinder when the reed opens the port; and the damper means comprising a tube which is connected [attached] to the valve plate, which extends vertically into the suction chamber, which is in communication with the port on a side of the port remote from the reed, and which is of such a size that, in use of the valve plate assembly, the tube contains a column of fluid which is sufficient to provide substantial mechanical damping of the motion of the reed.

17. (previously presented) A valve plate assembly according to claim 16 in which the tube is such that it extends vertically above the port.

18. (previously presented) A valve plate assembly according to claim 16 in which the port is in the valve plate, and in which the length of the tube is greater than the diameter of the port.

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19. *(previously presented)* A valve plate assembly according to claim 18 in which the length of the tube is at least twice the diameter of the port.

20. *(previously presented)* A compressor or a pump when including a valve plate assembly according to claim 16.

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